

VIEWPOINT

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Carter's speech reminiscent of his pollster's 1975 oration

By DAVID BRODER
WASHINGTON — As we near the end of Week Three of Jimmy Carter's self-created drama of his struggling-to-be-born-again presidency, it more and more comes to resemble the daring but ultimately unsuccessful tactic used by a prominent Republican three summers ago.

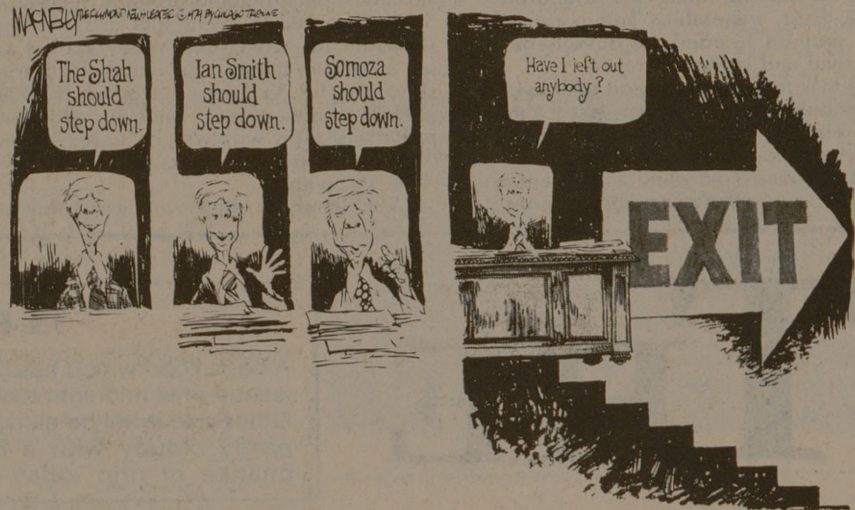
Camp David and its aftermath is proving to be for Jimmy Carter what "the Schweiker ploy" was for Ronald Reagan. Reduced to its political essence, it is a bold — almost desperate — bid to buy time in a rapidly eroding situation.

Recall the circumstances in the summer of 1976. Reagan had been battling Gerald Ford for months, but was falling further and further behind in the convention vote count, as the White House applied the squeeze to wavering delegates. Unless something happened, Reagan was going to be counted out.

At that desperate juncture (on the very day, in fact, when the CBS vote count would have put Ford over the top for the first time), John Sears, Reagan's manager, pulled Sen. Richard S. Schweiker of Pennsylvania, a moderate Republican with labor backing, out of his hat as Reagan's running mate. The tactic threw enough dust in spectators' and players' eyes that Reagan was able to keep his flickering chances alive right into the Kansas City convention hall, where they finally died.

In Carter's case, the crisis was provoked by polls which showed him falling further and further behind Sen. Edward M. Kennedy as the choice of Democratic voters for the 1980 nomination and even for the first time losing trial heats to possible Republican nominees like Reagan.

Home from two unexciting summits, surveying his deteriorating domestic prospects, Carter recognized that one more unsuccessful energy speech might just nail shut his political coffin. So he tried his version of the "Schweiker ploy," staged the



Camp David "domestic summit," came back with a pair of strong speeches, and then shook up his Cabinet and White House staff by getting mass resignations.

The outcome of this maneuver is unknown. But Carter, like Reagan before him, has confused some people, and disconcerted others who thought they knew his character and now find him suddenly altered. As a result of throwing dust in people's eyes, he had bought time to maneuver and fight for survival.

I have commented previously in this space on the personal courage it took for Carter to recognize that his presidency was teetering toward failure and to act to rescue it. What probably needs to be underlined, by way of balance, is the essentially political character of Carter's tactic. That is demonstrated by the fact that, in seeking to shift public concern from the old-hat energy issue to a broader "national malaise," Carter was quite literally reading from the script of his personal pollster, Patrick Caddell.

I was going through some files two nights after the Carter speech and came across an address Caddell had given in November 1975, at a Democratic issues conference in Louisville, Ky.

Some strangely familiar themes and phrases leaped out at me.

Caddell in 1975 declared that America faced "a crisis of confidence in the political process and the future of the nation." Carter in 1979 said "a crisis of confidence ... is threatening to destroy the social and political fabric of America."

Caddell in 1975 said, "We are reaping the harvest of more than a decade of national psychological trauma." Carter in 1979 said, "These changes did not happen overnight. They came upon us gradually, over the last generation."

Caddell in 1975 said, "Americans always

believed that this country was ruled by the ballot, not the bullet ... Then came Dallas and all the horror which has followed." Carter in 1979 said, "We were sure ours was a nation of the ballot, not the bullet — until the murders of John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr."

There were similar parallelisms, in structure and phrasing, in subsequent paragraphs in both speeches dealing with Vietnam, Watergate, inflation, the economy and — yes — the energy crisis.

Both Caddell and Rich Hertzberg, Carter's speechwriter, told me that Caddell's Louisville address of 1975 had not been consulted in the preparation of Carter's 1979 speech. But it is no accident that in laying the stress where he did, Carter was returning to the themes which led Caddell, in 1975, to decide that the then long-shot ex-governor of Georgia had the best chance of any candidate to win the presidency in a shell-shocked nation.

Both Carter's admiration for Caddell and Carter's ability to absorb and internalize the polling data Caddell feeds him are well-known. In this crucial case, they seem to have achieved a complete synthesis of viewpoints and language.

The introspection on the mountaintop and consultation with more than 100 leaders brought Carter to the exact understanding of the American dilemma which his pollster had reached almost four years before.

By scrambling back to that political hard-rock, Carter has gained some time for further tactical maneuver. Whether he has gained any more than time remains to be seen.

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Screens only thing between you and the ultimate 'buzz'

It's a shame in these energy-conscious times that students living in older apartment complexes are not able to turn off their air-conditioning to conserve electricity. The lack of window screens makes apartments paradise for flies and grasshoppers.

Under the existing College Station building code, every dwelling unit has to have screens. However, some apartment managers have said they don't want to spend the extra money to purchase and install them. A public hearing was held two weeks ago. The managers were there, but student representatives were not. Based on the managers' side of the issue, the city council is considering an amendment to the building code which would allow managers to charge students desiring screens a deposit to insure their safe return.

Mayor Lorence Bravenec compares the deposit to having to pay for indoor plumbing. "The council could be convinced that

students want to live in screened apartments and probably wouldn't amend the ordinance as planned," he said.

The screens should be standard as the existing code suggests. Most students cannot afford to pay an added \$20 for window screens when they are already faced with their regular apartment and phone deposits.

The council is not planning to take action on the proposed amendment until their first August meeting. Bravenec suggests that students desiring screens make their wishes known to the council before then.

Only student input can make the council change its mind. Consider the savings in your electricity bills if you were able to turn off your air-conditioning for a few hours or days without being annoyed by bees, flies or other insects that would otherwise invade your domain.

—K.L.R.

Letters to the Editor

Beware one-way streets

Editor: Moshier Lane has been changed from a two-way street to a one-way street running west from Bizzell Street. I was one of the unfortunate numbers who didn't know about this change and received a ticket for traveling in the wrong direction on that

street. As I await my appearance before the Appeals Board, I often wonder why the University Police neglected to inform the students, faculty, and staff of this change. I checked with Keith Taylor, Battalion campus editor, and he checked with the University News Service. Both inquiries yielded the same result: The University Police Department did not release any statement regarding the change on Moshier Lane.

Now I would not complain about the matter had it been made public knowledge, but the fact is that the information was withheld from the general public. It is true that there is a one-way sign at the corner of Moshier and Bizzell. There is also a "Do Not Enter" sign at the other end of Moshier Lane but it is not highly visible because of the parking situation on weekends. Couldn't the University Police Department have informed the students about the change when the parking permits were issued? This would have been the best time to let the students know about it. But I suppose that it was in the best interest of his department that Capt. Mattux did not release any information about the change. As for me, my fate rests on the decision of the Appeals Board.

—Cornelius Guillery, '79

Readers' Forum

Guest viewpoints, in addition to Letters to the Editor, are welcome. All pieces submitted to Readers' forum should be:

- Typed triple space
- Limited to 60 characters per line
- Limited to 100 lines

the small society

by Brickman



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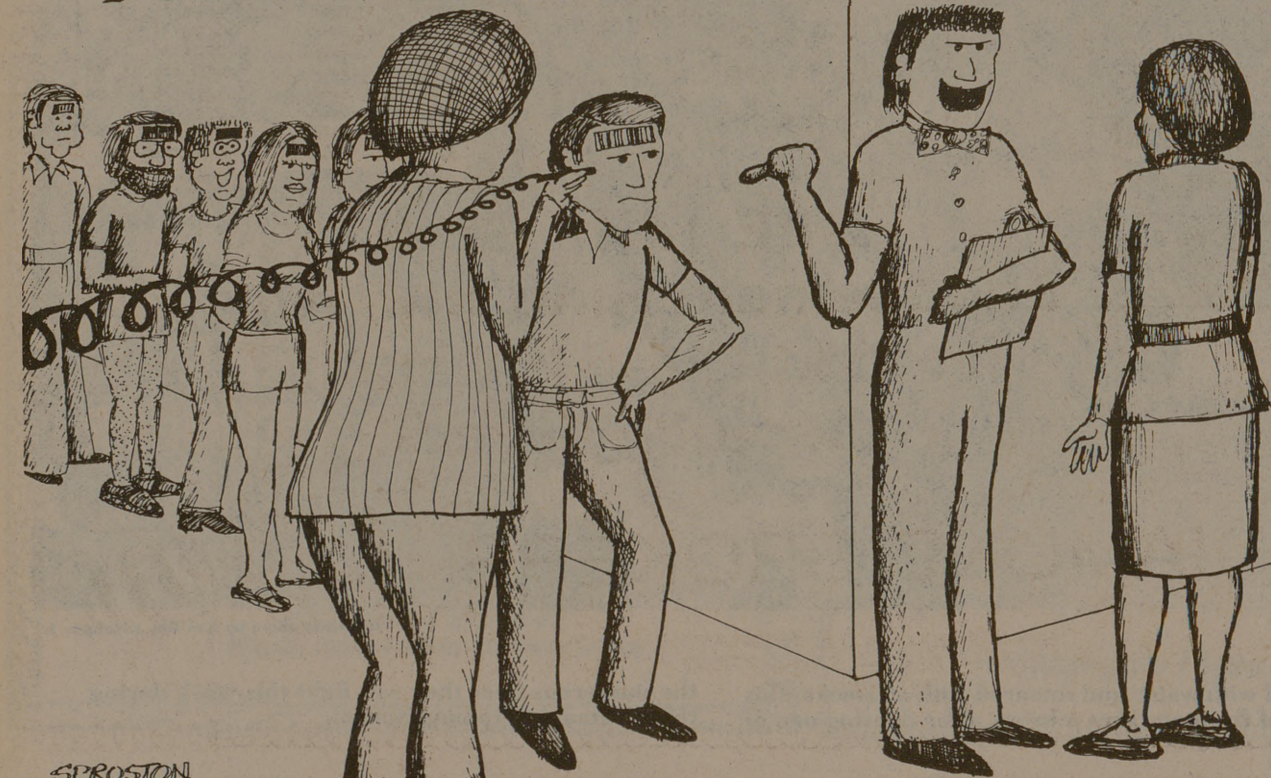
Headline hopping

I WISH I'D SAID THAT, DEPT. — John Lofton, Jr., editor of the American Conservative Union's monthly magazine "Battle Line," has been quoted recently in two other publications. Both of those quotes were Lofton's comments on government workers and their real cost to taxpayers. Mr. Lofton, not known for mincing his words, has some rather acerbic advice for our nation's leaders with regard to the hundreds of thousands of bureaucrats occupying our nation's capital.

First, as reported in The Wall Street Journal, Lofton offers his own version of the odd-even system, so popular now in many states experiencing gasoline shortages. Says Lofton: "Starting right away, if not sooner, all Energy Department employees whose last names begin with letters A through Z should stay home on odd numbered days of the month; these same employees should also stay home on even numbered days."

Not to be outdone by the Journal, the editors of "Epic," the bi-monthly publication of the Fiscal Policy Council, Inc., carried Lofton's response to Sen. James Sasser's (D-Tenn.) proposal that would reduce by \$500 million the amount allocated to the Executive Branch for travel in fiscal 1980. But that is the wrong approach. Said Lofton: "The danger posed to the Republic is not from federal employees who are in the air traveling, but from federal employees on the ground ... The real danger to the American taxpayer is not from a GS-16 guideline writer at HEW who is airborne somewhere over Kansas. The danger is when that GS-16 is in his office beavering away. From a cost-effective standpoint, the most harmless bureaucrat imaginable is one who is away from Washington."

I SOLVED THE ID PROBLEM IN THE CAFETERIA



SPROSTON

TOP OF THE NEWS

NATION

Oklahoma girl bitten by rabid skunk

A 7-year-old Oklahoma City girl has become the latest victim of a rabies epidemic that state officials say is the worst in at least 25 years. Donna Martel Boone was bitten on the back of her right hand last week while she attempted to pet a skunk in her grandparents' Pilot Point, Texas, yard. The girl's father beat the animal to death with a garden hoe after it bit the girl and then charged towards him. Officials determined Monday the animal was rabid. Both the girl and her mother told hospital officials the animal was "acting weird" and foaming at the mouth before the child was bitten. Dr. Gary Williamson of John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth said the child had shown no signs of having contracted the disease. A determination as to whether the girl has rabies will not be possible until she completes a painful, 21-shot series of anti-rabies injections, Williamson said.

Robber shoots self, dies instantly

A young robber in Long Beach, Calif., pointed a gun at his victim and pulled the trigger, but nothing happened. The gunman then looked down the barrel, pulled the trigger again, and the bullet discharged. John W. Elliott, 20, a Canadian from Ontario province, died instantly with a bullet hole through his left eye. Police said Elliott walked up to William Bullard, 45, on a darkened street Sunday before dawn. The gunman struck Bullard twice with a .38-caliber revolver and Bullard fell to the ground before Elliott shot himself.

Florida man seeks stay of execution

With less than 48 hours to live, condemned Florida murderer Howard Virgil Lee Douglas is seeking a stay of execution from the federal courts. Douglas' attorneys, their appeals exhausted in the state courts, went before U.S. District Judge Ben Krentzman Monday to ask him to stay the electrocution, scheduled for 7 a.m. Thursday, while they challenge the constitutionality of his murder conviction. Douglas, 43, was convicted in 1973 of shooting to death Jessie Atkins in Pok County. The jury recommended life imprisonment instead of the death sentence. But Circuit Judge William K. Love ignored the recommendation and handed down the death sentence, which Douglas' attorneys claim amounts to double jeopardy.

Eight plead 'innocent' to vote buying

Rep. Claude "Buddy" Leach, D-a., and seven co-defendants pleaded innocent in Lake Charles, La., Tuesday to charges they conspired to buy votes in last year's congressional election. Leach stood before a microphone in federal district court and slowly replied "not guilty" to each of the 30 counts read by U.S. Magistrate Joseph Tritico.

The arraignment of all eight defendants lasted one hour and was followed immediately by closed pretrial hearings before U.S. District Judge Earl Veron.

Carter gives 'survivors' pep talk

President Carter has completed his Cabinet shake-up, but soon will announce some White House staff changes "to broaden and diversify" his in-house advisers beyond his tight Georgia circle. The president, in his shirt sleeves, gave some 300 employees Monday a pep talk in the aftermath of the stunning blows that found the Camp David "Domestic Summit." Powell relayed word to reporters of Carter's remarks, which included a question and answer session, and reported the president said "they shouldn't be fearful of the process" and "that anyone who met the standards of competency, hard work and loyalty had nothing to worry about." Powell also announced Carter would hold a nationally televised and broadcast news conference Wednesday night.

Pollster: pessimism began in 60's

President Carter's pollster Patrick Caddell said Tuesday the erosion of confidence in America began during Vietnam and Watergate and now has reached serious proportions. He said Americans' pessimism about their own lives and the nation's future has increased dramatically. Caddell said the personal pessimism — to which Carter alluded in his address Sunday — may be something beyond government's ability to soften.

F. Lee Bailey to testify in libel suit

Retired Philadelphia lawyer Morris Passon filed a \$3 million libel suit in Norristown, Pa. against F. Lee Bailey, saying Bailey accused him of the 1958 murder of his wealthy brother-in-law Max Kravitz in published newspaper and magazine reports. Kravitz' wife, Ethel, was convicted of the slaying and sentenced to 20 years in prison. She had Bailey file an appeal when she was paroled after eight years. Passon charged Bailey leaked information to the press in 1967 "to create a climate of suspicion as to the guilt of Morris Passon to make it appear that his client Ethel Kravitz was innocent." Bailey's attorney indicated he will call his famous client to the stand Monday to testify in his own defense.

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